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Sinus infections viral

SINUS infections will most likely clear up without antibiotics and there is little evidence oral decongestants will help to relieve their symptoms, according to the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

New guidance from NICE for treating acute sinusitis says most patients will begin to feel better within two to three weeks and should be encouraged to use paracetamol.

Despite the established fact that the use of antibiotics in viral infections fuels antibiotic resistance, they are given to 91% of people who visit their GP with symptoms of sinusitis, NICE said.

See nice.org.uk for more info. **MEANWHILE**, in a narrative review published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, lead author GP Professor Chris Del Mar said that in Australia, the antibiotic resistance crisis may be partly alleviated by reducing antibiotic use in general practice, which has relatively high prescribing rates.

Antibiotics are mostly prescribed for acute respiratory infections, for which they provide only minor benefits, Del Mar said.

He proposes measures to reduce the antibiotic habit, such as changing the default to “no repeats” in electronic prescribing, changing the packaging of antibiotics to facilitate tailored amounts for the right indication and restricting access to selected antibiotics to conserve them.

He makes a number of other recommendations including for future research - see mja.com.au.

AZ to bypass wholesalers

ASTRAZENECA has confirmed that effective from tomorrow it will be changing the way it distributes about a quarter of its brands to retail pharmacies in Australia.

The change will see pharmacies ordering nine AstraZeneca products direct from the company with deliveries provided via DHL.

Affected items include Zoladex, ZolaCos, Cosudex, Iressa, Lynparza, Tagrisso, Brilinta, Bydureon and Byetta, with the company saying the move will allow it to “monitor supply and demand for these specialised products more closely, respond to market need with greater speed and accuracy and improve efficiencies”.

A total of 32 other AstraZeneca products will continue to be distributed to retail pharmacies via existing wholesale distributors, who will also continue to meet all of the company’s hospital pharmacy distribution requirements.

“AstraZeneca will be working closely with wholesalers and pharmacists over the coming weeks to support a smooth transition... whilst retail pharmacies will need to make some administrative changes to their ordering process, we don’t expect patients to be affected,” the company said.

Strong 1st quarter

ONLINE health, media and technology firm 1st Group Ltd has reported record sales for the three months to 30 Sep across all four of its revenue streams- subscription, usage fees, advertising & set up fees.

Sigma Healthcare issued a trading update in relation to the move (**PD** breaking news), saying it was looking to adjust trading terms for pharmacy customers as one of a number of options under consideration to mitigate the impact of the change.

The company said the nine AZ products withdrawn from wholesale distribution accounted for about 1% of its annual sales, with Sigma’s forecast profits for 2018 and 2019 unaffected.

Sigma said the Pharmacy Guild and the National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA) were consulting with the government to mandate availability of PBS products via CSO wholesalers.

A spokesperson for the Guild said it “supports the NPSA arguments and have also argued this case in our submission to the Pharmacy Review”.

Gardasil-9 confirmed

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) has recommended adding the new 9-valent Gardasil-9 human papilloma virus vaccine from CSL’s Seqirus to the National Health Immunisation Program (NIP) – Designated Vaccines, from its Jul meeting Public Summary Document release (**PD** 22 Aug 17).

Other recommendations include the PBAC acceptance of a Ridaura (oral gold) capsule to replace the tablet from 01 Jul due to supply issues and decisions around 31 other products - see pbs.gov.au.

Summer is coming!

PRODUCT suppliers are invited to take part in the upcoming **Pharmacy Daily Summer Spotlight** feature which will appear starting from next week.

Highlighting products and offers for summer sales, the Summer Spotlight promotion will include four items on a page, with insertions including an image, a brief description and a call to action for pharmacies to order by phone, email or online.

To have your products included call 1300 799 220 or email Mel on advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Pharmacists ping GP

A GENERAL practitioner has been found guilty of professional misconduct relating to inappropriate prescription of drugs of addiction without authority by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, following a Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) case arising from information it received from two pharmacists.

A number of patients were referenced in relation to their being prescribed schedule 8 drugs Fentanyl, morphine, methadone and Oxycodone, schedule 4D drugs temazepam, diazepam and alprazolam, Schedule 4 Tramadol and schedule 4 codeine phosphate + paracetamol and others, with inappropriate quantities also involved in some cases.

Costs were ordered in favour of the HCCC and the practitioner’s license was cancelled with a non-reapplication period of two years.

See details at caselaw.nsw.gov.au.

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Pharmacy Daily



Dispensary Corner

NEXT time you need cardiac surgery (!) ask for the afternoon shift - it may improve your recovery chances, according to new research in *The Lancet*.

The scientists found afternoon adverse events less common than morning, with the difference attributed to the patients' circadian rhythm, not the surgeon's sense of satiety.

Heart health has for many years been known to fluctuate over the course of a day, but this is the first time the impact of that effect on cardiac surgery has been examined.

"Our cardiovascular system has the greatest output around mid/late-afternoon, which explains why professional athletes usually record their best performances around this time," said UK Medical Research Council's Dr John O'Neill - see thelancet.com.



HAVE you bought into the internet-touted magic of coconut oil's amazing cholesterol-lowering, heart-risk lowering, weight loss-inducing, bacteria-killing, teeth-whitening properties?

Apparently it's all just self-reinforced unjustified rubbish - research has shown that coconut oil as it is called, although it is technically a fat, does none of those things, although if chewing it for fibre reduces your intake of other things, it may be a positive. See theconversation.com.

Influenza vax controversy

AUSTRALIA'S chief medical officer Professor Brendan Murphy has blasted claims that Australians received a "cheap flu vaccine," after reports yesterday quoted Immunisation Coalition chair Paul van Buynder saying he blamed the "\$6 budget version of the flu vaccine used in the national vaccination program" for record levels of influenza during winter.

Murphy said the claim was "utterly false...the flu vaccines chosen this year were the best available in the Australian market, selected by medical experts in Australia and around the world".

Vaccine maker Sanofi also rejected the Immunisation Coalition suggestion, saying the 2017 flu vaccine supplied in Australia is the "current standard of care globally for the prevention of influenza".

The 2017 season was particularly bad due to the circulation of multiple strains and the virulence of the H3N2 strain, Sanofi said.

The company said the bad season highlighted the need for innovative

medicines to enhance protection, adding it was in the process of registration of an enhanced influenza vaccine as a step forward to address this issue.

"We are working with the Department of Health to bring flu high dose to the population as soon as possible," the company said.

Certara-Monash link

MONASH University will receive \$750,000 in new funding from the Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals Industry Growth Centre (MTPConnect) as part of its ongoing collaboration with Certara's d3 Medicine offshoot.

With matching funding from Certara, the combined \$1.5m will assist the Certara-Monash University Industry Fellowship Program to "identify and develop the next generation of industry-experienced drug development scientists" via training in clinical pharmacology, pharmacometrics and regulatory science".

TGA sanctions

SWISSE Wellness, Medicines Australia and the Australian Self-Medication Industry are among stakeholders providing submissions to a TGA consultation on enhancing sanctions and penalties in the Therapeutic Goods Act - tga.gov.au.

Pharmacy Guild Update

Pharmacists Digital Health Leaders Network

EXPRESSIONS of interest are now being sought for Guild members wanting to participate in the Pharmacists Digital Health Leaders Network.

The network will promote the clinical uptake and meaningful use of My Health Record (MHR) in community pharmacy nationally and its objectives include to:

- Provide expertise and leadership to the pharmacy profession to promote My Health Record.
- Advocate the meaningful clinical use of My Health Record and foster its uptake by pharmacies.
- Assist in raising awareness of the role of pharmacists in My Health Record by distributing key messages throughout networks (including via social media).

Before providing your expression of interest please review the terms of reference here: www.guild.org.au.

Responses should be sent to Matt.Ryan@guild.org.au by Friday 3 November 2017 COB.

WIN WITH SOUTHERNATURE

This week Pharmacy Daily and SOUTHERNATURE are giving away their Ultra DHA for Pregnancy and Lactation each day, valued at \$49.95 RRP.

Southernature's Ultra DHA for Pregnancy and Lactation is formulated to support Omega 3 supplementation with a higher DHA to EPA ratio during pregnancy and lactation. This one-a-day product has an IFOS 5-star rating for purity, potency and freshness to give women a complete peace of mind to consume during pregnancy and lactation.

For more info **CLICK HERE**.

To win, be the first person from QLD to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What criteria does a fish oil product need to pass to have a five star rating from IFOS ?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Michelle Hyatt from Mylan.

